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The City University of New York
Graduate Center: 33 West 42 Street, New York, N. Y. 10036



Ph.D. Program in Philosophy

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Professor Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
Stanford University School of Medicine
Stanford University Medical Center
Stanford, California
94305

Dear Professor Lederberg:

Please pardon my delay in answering. Your letter was forwarded to me at my new position.

I am, of course, honored by your having read my article, but am also sorry to have caused you grief. The reason why I interpreted your remarks as a "threat" is that you seemed to be saying that one way or another-- despite "overzealous policing" or through "forcing their use on society"-- "seemingly bizarre genetic experiments" are going to be done; moreover, they must be allowed to be done. (The only other statement of yours that I have read is your letter in Atlantic, March, 1969, commenting on Fleming's piece. This was subsequent to my article. Had I read your letter first, I still think I would have interpreted you in the way I did.) Perhaps the word "threat" was a wrong one to use. Also, I should have been more cautious than to make use of a newspaper report, which might very well have been inaccurate and out-of-context. But I gather that you have no objections over the accuracy.

I should add a word about my sentence: "The legal control of biological engineering is itself liable to abuse..." Given a legal structure of control it would not only be possible to stifle research that should be done, but it will also be easier to make-- what I would regard as-- bad uses of biomedical technology. I fear that we are in fact likely to end up with both of these results.

The copy of my Monist article is enclosed. I hope you find something of interest in it. I look forward with eagerness to the assembly of writings that you mentioned. If you have an offprint of a piece that you think would be appropriate for me, I would appreciate your sending it.

Yours truly,

Martin Golding
Professor of Philosophy

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P.S. In my UCLA article "atopogenics" should read "atypogenics" -- a needless barbarism in any case.

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